

Charles E. Schumer, Brian Schatz, Benjamin L. Cardin, Robert Menendez, Tammy Duckworth, Christopher A. Coons, Kirsten E. Gillibrand, Jacky Rosen, Patrick J. Leahy, Mazie Hirono, Margaret Wood Hassan, Jack Reed, Sheldon Whitehouse, Tammy Baldwin, Richard J. Durbin, Chris Van Hollen, Tina Smith, Ben Ray Lujan.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. LUJÁN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the cloture motion on Calendar No. 364 and that the mandatory quorum call for the cloture motion filed today, October 7, be waived and that the cloture motion ripen at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, October 19.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. LUJÁN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TEXAS ABORTION BAN

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, last night, a Federal judge in Texas did what the U.S. Supreme Court should have done. He issued an injunction blocking Texas' clearly unconstitutional bounty hunter abortion ban from being enforced while challenges to the law make their way through the courts. The ruling by U.S. District Judge Robert Pitman came in response to a challenge of the Texas ban brought by the Federal Department of Justice.

The Texas abortion law, known as S.B. 8, is the most restrictive abortion law in the Nation and the most serious challenge to *Roe v. Wade* in 50 years. It was deliberately crafted to outlaw most abortions while allowing State lawmakers to evade judicial review. It deputizes private citizens to enforce the ban by suing anyone who "aids and abets" a woman seeking an abortion. And it offers rewards of \$10,000 or more to plaintiffs who bring suits.

In his ruling, Judge Pitman wrote that Texas politicians had "contrived an unprecedented and transparent statutory scheme" that has "unlawfully prevented [women in Texas] from exercising control over their lives in ways that are protected by the Constitution."

The Supreme Court order allowing the Texas law to take effect was a product of the Court's "shadow docket" of cases that are decided without full briefing or oral arguments—and without transparency or accountability.

The 5-4 order, from the Court's conservative majority, was criticized by some of the Court's own members, including Chief Justice John Roberts, who warned that Texas lawmakers had created a "model for action," that other States could copy to undermine constitutionally protected rights.

The Chief Justice was right. Since the Court's ruling on S.B. 8, elected officials and political candidates in a number of States have vowed to introduce similar abortion bans.

With Judge Pitman's wise ruling last night, that rush to use citizen bounty hunters to avoid legal accountability while denying the constitutional rights of women and perhaps others is on hold—at least for now. But the threat to constitutional rights remains. Texas has already filed a notice of appeal in the conservative Fifth Circuit.

Abortion providers remain at risk of facing bounty hunter lawsuits if they perform abortions prohibited by the ban while the injunction is in place. Anti-choice organizations have vowed to be "vigilant" in suing individuals retroactively if the order is reversed.

I hope that justice—and the Constitution—will prevail in the coming days as this litigation continues. The fundamental rights of millions of Texans are at stake.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, I rise today in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month to celebrate our Hispanic and Latino communities and their immeasurable contributions to our Nation. Hispanic and Latinos have been with our country since its very founding and have helped make America exceptional. Hispanic and Latino Americans play vital roles in our communities. They are our teachers, our healthcare heroes, our entrepreneurs, our essential workers, our public servants and elected officials, all vital to the fabric of our Nation.

Hispanic Heritage Month started as a commemorative week that Congress established in 1968 and expanded to a full month in 1988 to recognize the critical role the Latino community has played in the civil rights movement. Celebrations start September 15, a significant date, as it is the independence date for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, while Mexico celebrates its independence on September 16, and Chile celebrates its independence on September 18.

This month, we celebrate the nearly 61 million Latino Americans across the country and the more than 600,000 Hispanic or Latino residents in Maryland. Maryland is proudly one of the most diverse States in the Nation. We are home to people with origins in Central and South America, with sizeable populations of Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Puerto Ricans, and Mexicans.

America is a nation of immigrants; people from far and wide have settled in the United States, the land of oppor-

tunity. Since the Immigration Act of 1965, millions of individuals from Central and South America have immigrated to the United States for numerous reasons, including economic instability or violence in their native country.

We take this month to highlight the importance of the Hispanic and Latino communities, including the election in 1822 of Joseph Marion Hernandez, the first Hispanic in Congress, as Florida's Delegate. Today, according to the Congressional Research Service, there are 54 Hispanic or Latino Members—a record number—serving: 47 in the House, including two Delegates and the Resident Commissioner, and seven in the Senate.

Though the Hispanic and Latino communities have been essential to America's identity, from the scientific innovation to art, culture, music, food, and so much more, we must still recognize the disparities that these communities face. For the second year, we are celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has affected people of color at disproportionate rates in terms of economic distress and case severity. The Hispanic or Latino unemployment rate soared to 18.9 percent in February of 2020. Hispanic or Latina women took even larger losses compared to their male counterparts. The unemployment disparity is due to the overrepresentation of Hispanic or Latino workers in the food preparation or serving industry, as well as building and grounds cleaning and maintenance. These sectors suffered some of the harshest economic effects of the pandemic. Even though the unemployment rate has decreased to 6.4 percent in Hispanic and Latino communities—6.2 percent in Maryland—they still have not experienced the same economic recoveries as their White counterparts.

For the immigrants who do not have a green card, their likelihood to have lost a job is even higher. Many say that at least one family member in their household has lost a job or wages. Families are suffering; they are worried about putting food on the table or even losing their homes. The financial toll of the last year and a half has exacerbated the prepandemic inequalities that the Hispanic or Latino communities were already facing.

Hispanic or Latino people are also more likely face the harshest health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Hispanic or Latino people are twice as likely to catch COVID, 2.8 times more likely to be hospitalized, and 2.3 times more likely to die compared to their White counterparts. In my own home State, Hispanic or Latino people are 14.3 percent of the case rates when they only make up 10.6 percent of our population. With the widening gaps of healthcare coverage, Hispanic or Latino families face large hospital bills for their bouts of COVID. Twenty percent of non-elderly Hispanic or Latino people are